THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PARAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) According to the Land Use Statistics for 2003-04 compiled by the Ministry of Agriculture, the net sown area in the country is estimated to be 140.9 million hectare and the net irrigated area is 55.1 million hectare *i.e.* 39.1%.

(c) and (d) Irrigation being a State subject, irrigation projects are conceived, planned and implemented by the State Goevernments as per their own priority. The National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP) states that irrigation will receive the highest investment priority and all on-going projects will be completed according to strict time schedule and that water management in all its aspects, both for irrigation and drinking purposes will receive urgent attention. The Government of India provides Central assistance to the State Governments for completion of on-going irrigation projects under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP). The AIBP criteria have been relaxed and procedures simplified to cover more projects under this programme. A pilot scheme titled "National Project for Repair, Renovation and Restoration of Water Bodies directly linked to Agriculture" has also been approved by Government of India in January 2005.

Cauvery Water Dispute Tribunal

255. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Centre has studied the final verdict of the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal delivered on 5th February, 2007 quantifying the share of each riparian State;

(b) whether the Clause VII of the Tribunal's order relating to deficit sharing during distress years calling for proportionately reduced share to each State is quantifiable and, therefore, workable; and

(c) whether it is a fact that due to scanty rainfall over the years and resultant drought conditions, the ground water resources in Karnataka stand depleted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PARAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) The Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal (CWDT) submitted its report and

decision on 5.2.2007 as per Section 5(2) of the Inter-State River Water Disputes (ISRWD) Act, 1956. With submission of report and decision under Section 5(2) of the Act, Central Government or the State Governments concerned are entitled to seek explanation and guidance from the Tribunal under Section 5(3) of the Act within three months from the date of decision. For this purpose, a set of report has been sent to Central Water Commission on 7.2.2007 for suggesting suitable reference points on the report and decision of the Tribunal for seeking explanation and guidance from the Tribunal.

(c) Occurrence and distribution of rainfall in Karnataka is uneven. On an average, more that 2/3rd of the State receives less than 750 millimeter rainfall spread over 55 days. Use of ground water for irrigation, drinking water as well as for industry has increased manifolds during the recent decades. Further, more than 97% area of the State is underlain by hard rocks, which have limited ground water potential. As per the latest assessment of ground water resources as on March, 2004, the stage of ground water development in the State is 70% of the annual replenishable resource. Out of 175 talukas in the state, 65 talukas are over exploited and significant decline has been observed either in pre-monsoon or post-monsoon period.

Agitation against decision of Cauvery Tribunal

256. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been widespread agitation in Karnataka against the decision of Cauvery Tribunal on distribution of water;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Central Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) what is the action plan for inter-linking of rivers and by when it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) As per information available in this Ministry a call for bandh on February 6, 2007 in protest against the decision of Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal